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1961
"Welcome to Synod"

British Lutheran

MAY 1961

Batswana heathen cannot understand how their Christian fellows can sing

Songs of Joy in a Cemetery

Every Englishman knows the name of the Bantu, or more correctly the Batswana, of Bechuanaland. Bechuanaland is one of the British African Protectorates, sandwiched between the Union of South Africa and Northern Rhodesia.

It was among the Batswana that David Livingstone, the great missionary to the black people of Africa, began his work. Even before him, Robert Moffat, Livingstone's father-in-law, had served them. To Moffat we owe the first translation of the Bible into the Tswana language.

Through migration from west to east, many Batswana tribes now live in the Province of Transvaal, west of Johannesburg. Lutheran missions began here in 1857. In the last thirty

genuine conversions, but obviously also a large number who took step because they did not want to miss the advantages the new brought. For with the Gospel came also education and civilization. The result today is a widely Christian people, among whom not only the Lutheran Church but also other denominations and countless sects have won adherents.

The Boer War, at the turn of the century, brought the first severe shock to the young Lutheran Batswana congregations. The moral reputation of the white man was called in question as the Batswana watched the spectacle of men who were once revered Christians warring against each other, bent upon mutual annihilation.

When, in the following decade, the gold mines of Johannesburg were opened, and, still later, the barren country known as the Witwatersrand was transformed by industrialisation, there surged over the native community one wave after the other of influences which attacked and dis-

The Batswana Mission in the Transvaal—another glimpse into the 1961 ELCE Foreign Mission Field

years of the last century, this work experienced a particularly stormy triumph. In great crowds, the heathen tribes with their chieftains pushed forward to Baptism. This produced a situation entirely different from that in the Zulu mission. To this day, Zulu chieftains offer obstinate resistance to the Gospel; the person who becomes a Christian is no longer considered a true Zulu.

Altogether different it is with the Batswana. They all wanted to become Christians. There were many

integrated the very foundation of Christian faith and life. This explains the difficult conditions under which the European missionaries, the pastors, evangelists, and unwaged workers from the Batswana people do their work in the Lutheran mission in the Transvaal today.

Our picture permits us to witness a Christian burial in the large cemetery of the Botshabelo-Putfontein congregation in the Litchenburg district. Missionary Friedrich Dietrich, who was sent out to South Africa



A Lutheran burial in a Batswana congregation

in Germany in 1952, preaches to a large congregation of Batswana the scriptural message concerning death: sin as the cause of death, of the victory over death through the truly risen Lord Christ.

Among those listening are many elderly people whose Baptism in their youth was a great act of personal decision. They still remember vividly the strong impression which a Christian burial at that time made on them as heathen.

Hitherto, people were accustomed to the terrible lamentations that took place when a death occurred, and all were tortured by fear of witchcraft and of evil spirits. Now, however, the great and incomprehensible happened. Here were people who could stand at the grave of their relatives and friends and sing

joyous victory songs about a strong Conqueror Who had killed death. The heathen were gripped. They clamoured to hear again the message of the victory of Life over death.

And to this day, the Gospel is, because of this, a truly joyous message. Best of all they love the Gospel according to St. John and often suggest that St. John did not really write his Gospel in Greek, but in their own Tswana language.

Lutheran mission work in West Transvaal among the Batswana is part of the mission programme of the Evangelical Lutheran Free Churches of Europe, in which, in 1961, also the Evangelical Lutheran Church of England participates.

by Pfarrer Wilhelm Hopf
translated by Pastor Marvin Brammeier

BE READY TO GIVE AN ANSWER

THREE, YET ON

The family sat down to tea, bowed their heads, and said together: "Come Lord Jesus, be our Guest, and let Thy gifts to us be blessed. Amen."

"It's so nice to have you home for tea, dear, I'm glad that all that overtime is finished," said Mrs. Smith, as she poured out the tea and made sure that everyone had something to eat.

"Daddy, are we going to play trains tonight?" asked Johnny. "We haven't done that for a long time."

"All right, but first we have to finish tea."

"Dad", Barbara said tentatively, "with all that stuff I get to do for homework, I thought . . ."

"No, Babs, not unless you really need me. You know well enough that you ought to do it yourself. All you want is a chance to get me to do your work so you can watch the telly," answered Mr. Smith with a twinkle in his eye. He remembered the many times he had been left to puzzle over a problem while Barbara had gotten herself completely wrapped up in some television programme and had forgotten all about him and her homework.

Tea over, the whole family joined in a family devotion, after which Barbara and Johnny went into the living room. Barbara quickly got down to her homework, Johnny

busied himself with erecting trains.

While Mrs. Smith cleared away the dishes and began the washing, she talked about the children. "You know, John, it's no use. We're going to have to settle that question of your son about the 'Trinity'," said. "He brought it up again today. I just can't get through to him. He keeps on asking how it's possible that Jesus is God when He's just a boy in a manger. He started at Christmas, and he's still at it."

"What did you tell him then?"

"You know: that God is Triune God, that He is only one, He shows Himself to us as three Persons in the Bible. I tried to explain as plain as I could that God was wonderful beyond our understanding, that He is one Being, and that there is no one like Him. But how can you explain this to an eight-year old boy who is learning in arithmetic that three is never one?"

"Maybe you should have tried to explain the matter to him in more concrete terms, maybe with a Bible story. He's had the story of Jesus' Baptism in Sunday School. I remember him coming home and talking about it."

"Yes, I remember."

"That may be a good way to tell him that Jesus is God's Son and therefore God."

"Yes", Mrs. Smith replied, "that might help him to understand that Jesus is God, but then I'm afraid he will ask, 'Well, mother, when Jesus went up into heaven, does that mean there are two Gods?' "

"Dear, all we can do is to tell him what God's Word says. We ourselves know no more. But we can tell him what Scripture says: *'There is none other God but one'* and what Jesus Himself said when He sent His disciples into the world, *'Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.'*"

"But, John, you know that this doesn't mean much to a child of eight. I wonder if there isn't something we can tell him in child's language about how God has revealed Himself."

"Do you remember the sermon that Pastor preached on the Trinity? It must have been last summer sometime. He spoke of the Trinity in terms of a story. I'm not sure, but I believe he used the text, *'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.'*"

"Ah, yes, I remember it well. It is the one in which he said that *in that name of* meant *into everything which was involved in that name, everything for which that name stands.*"

"Let's try to remember. Maybe it will give us the answer for Johnny. I recall he said that God showed Himself as a God of love and He did it in three Persons."

"Yes, He showed us His love as a Father in creating the world for us, and I think it's really wonderful that we have everything here on earth that we need for life. He certainly

thought of everything when He made us and our world. And, He didn't stop there either, because He still provides for our wants and needs in our daily existence."

"Then Pastor went on to show us how the love of God showed itself in the very direct way in which He saved us from our sins. He gave His Son to die for us. I remember Pastor used the passage: *'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His son.'*"

"And don't forget the passage he used from St. John: *'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.'* So God showed Himself in His love as Saviour and Redeemer."

"But, John, what about the Holy Ghost, the third Person? What is His work? How is the love of God shown in Him?" asked Mrs. Smith after a moment of thinking.

"Well, dear, that's easier. Because God loves us and saves us by grace through faith, He wants us to believe in Him. The Holy Ghost is the Person who leads us to believe in God and then stays with us to help us lead a God-pleasing life."

"Then," Mrs. Smith said, "we can tell Johnny that because God reveals Himself throughout the Bible as three Persons who work together for our welfare, as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, we should be very happy. Although we cannot understand how three can be one, yet because it is in this way that God shows Himself to us in the Bible that we believe it. It's a wonderful God, wonderful beyond all understanding, that we worship."

LISTENER.

WE GO FORWARD

by Pastor K. Mahler, Cambridge

This is not to be a complete report on the official actions of the 1961 Synod. Delegates of the congregations will be making a thorough work report that. This is rather to be a series of reflections by a first-time attendee, with one aim—to describe the impact of a group of Lutheran believers gathered together in one place. The hope is that those who read will want to experience the same impact and will begin planning now to attend next year.

The 7th Annual Synod of the E.L.C.E. convened in St. Andrew's Church, South Ruislip, Middlesex, on April 28 and 29. The theme chosen for the two days of meeting was, "We Go Forward—in His Name". This could indeed, reflect the tone of the sessions.

Progress forward was measured, for the most part, by reference to the ambitious 25-year plan that was adopted at last year's Synod. But, "Master Plan" remains a thing on paper until one sees the people involved.

JOY

In the matter of expansion by the establishment of new missions, for instance, one had to see the obvious joy of the delegate from Plymouth. He proudly announced that the Rev. Robert Bruer would be leaving his present orientation work to take up full-time residence and begin full-time work there early this autumn. One had also to listen to the delegate from the Lutheran Church of Harlow, whose congregation was accepted as a full-blown member this year. As he described the breathless pace of activities in his group, one saw Lutherans reaching out with the Gospel of Jesus Christ into their community with some of the urgency of the Church in the days of the apostles.

WITNESS

Growth in communicant membership remained a statistical idea (however exciting) until several of the delegates identified themselves as new to the church during the past year. Hearing their witness to what their new-found faith had meant to their lives made one reflect that such a joy, multiplied by 49, is fit cause for singing to the Church's Lord.

CONVICTION

Or, again, the significant increase in the contributions of E.L.C.E. members took on a very living aspect as the delegates listened to the Synodical Essay. This was presented, for the first time in our church history by a layman, Mr. Eric Smith. Most of us know him as secretary of the church and the ever-present help at 42 Museum Street. When he stood before the Synod, however, and spoke with deep conviction about the stewardship of our whole lives in the love of Jesus Christ, stewardship could no longer mean just cold finance.

Sunday School enrolment was way up but attendance showed less increase. This could not remain just a statistical problem as we listened. One of the delegates related the problem his congregation found in

petition of the "goggle-box" programmes beamed at children on Sunday noons.

COMMUNION

average attendance at Holy Communion decreased during 1960. There expressed concern for that. It really came to life, however, during the communion service at which the Rev. Dr. Herman Mayer, secretary Missouri Synod's Board of European affairs, preached the sermon. If communing with one's fellow-believers can be such a joy, one wondered, should any of our church's folk miss the opportunity of doing it often?



The "Any Questions" Panel

to right : E. C. LUTZ, Councillor; E. F. R. SMITH, Secretary; PASTOR W. P. GAS, Question Master; PASTOR E. GEO. PEARCE, Chairman; PASTOR ARNOLD RAKOW, Councillor; ALFRED FLEMMING, Treasurer; CHARLES FRY, Councillor.

Photo by *Weekly Post Newspapers*

The Executive Council may seem sometimes to be a group who deliberate in closed chambers on mysterious matters. When they served as an "Any Questions?" panel on the first evening of the Synod, they emerged as a group of serious-minded men, wrestling with important issues with dedication and courage. The lively discussion that ensued during their appearance made it clear that this was a feature that ought to be repeated.

One could enumerate more instances, but perhaps this will be sufficient to whet the appetites of those who stayed at home. When all is said and done, the Church is not an institution but people, not an organization but an organism, the living, growing human Body of Christ. Attending synod is a sure way to come to realize that.

NEW

From the 1961 Synod



Councillor S. A. H. King, J.P., Chairman of the Ruislip-Northwood Urban District Council, standing centre, flanked by Executive Councillors and delegates of the original ELCE congregations, addressing the 1961 Synod at St. Andrews, Ruislip. Left to right: DAVID STEVENS, Holy Trinity lay delegate; ROGER WINGER, Holy Trinity pastoral delegate; CHARLES FRY, Councillor; ALFRED FLEMMING, Treasurer; MR. S. A. H. KING, J.P., Chairman; E. GEO. PEARCE, Councillor; JAMES TAYLOR, newly-elected Treasurer; E. C. LUTZ, Councillor; NORMAN HEINTZ, Luther-Tyndale pastoral delegate; G. C. LAWTON, Luther-Tyndale lay delegate.

Photo by *Weekly Post Newspaper*

● Civic Welcome

Councillor S. A. H. King, J.P., Chairman of the Ruislip-Northwood Urban District Council, welcomed the thirty delegates to the Seventh Annual Synod at St. Andrews Lutheran Church, Ruislip, on 28-29 April. In the opening session, Dr. H. A. Mayer, Missions Secretary of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, and Bishop W. Fierla of the Polish Lutheran Church in Exile addressed the meeting.

● Seventh Congregation Accepted

Harlow Lutheran Congregation of Harlow, Essex, was accepted as the seventh ELCE member congregation. Action on the application of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Cambridge, was deferred.

● James Taylor New Treasurer

Mr. James Taylor, member of St. Andrews, Ruislip, and of the ELCE Church Extension Fund Committee, was elected to the Executive Committee for a 3-year term as ELCE Treasurer. He succeeds Mr. Alfred Fleming who declined to stand for election. Mr. E. F. R. Smith, Holy Trinity, was re-elected as ELCE Secretary. Mr. George Humphreys was ratified as member of the Board for Lutheran Agencies.

● Master Plan Committee

Resolution No. 2, calling for appointment of a "Master Plan Committee" of three laymen and a pastor, was adopted. The function of the new committee will be to stimulate our congregations and missions to a deeper study and wider application of Biblical principles in the two areas of stewardship.

evangelism", "to keep the pro-
ns and goals of the ELCE
er Plan constantly before the
of the whole church", and "to
each member congregation to
p its own *parish* Master Plan."

ne ELCE Master Plan, adopted
ne 1960 Synod at Sunderland,
ects financial independence for
ELCE in 18-25 years, on the
of 10-15% annual increase in
bership and giving. The 1961
ter Plan Committee resolution
urages each subsidized congrega-
to set a target date for self-
ort and each self-supporting con-
ation a target date when for
y pound given, it spends 10/- on
and 10/- on others for the pro-
ation of the Gospel.

atified as members of the new
ter Plan Committee were Pastor
Hennig of Harlow, Mr. J. C.
rge of Luther-Tyndale, London,
Albert Smith of Holy Trinity,
don, and Mr. J. Ansett of St.
ls, Boreham Wood.

1962 Synod at Cardiff

he invitation of Mr. E. Burnett,
diff lay-delegate, to hold the
nth Annual Synod at Cardiff was
pted. Dates will be announced
r. Mr. Burnett announced that
new Lutheran church in Cardiff
be dedicated on Saturday, 15

"Any Questions" Panel

a novel item of the 1961 Synod
k place on Friday evening when
nbers of the Executive Council
ned a panel to answer any ques-
s on any phase of ELCE work.
estion Master W. P. Borgas hand-
queries from the audience rang-
from: "Why does the ELCE
elop its expansion programme on

a wide rather than on a concen-
trated basis?" and "What differences
in doctrine and ritual exist between
the ELCE and the Continental
Lutheran churches?" to "Why do
pastors wear clerical collars? Does
it give them a sense of security?"

● Devotions by Laymen

As in all previous Synods, all ses-
sions were opened and closed with
prayers spoken by lay-delegates. New
in the 1961 Synod: all proceedings
were recorded on tape.

● Lay Essayist

The Synodical Essay was for the
first time in ELCE history delivered
by a layman, Mr. E. F. R. Smith,
who used a filmstrip to illustrate his
lecture on stewardship and evangel-
ism.

1961 ELCE CALL ASSIGNED

On his return from theological confer-
ences in America, on Sunday, 7th May,
Pastor Normal Nagel of Cambridge
brought word that the 1961 call issued
by the Executive Council had been
assigned to Mr. Warren Fanning who
will be graduated from Concordia The-
ological Seminary, St. Louis, in June. Mr.
Fanning is a Canadian, from Trail,
British Columbia; his wife an American,
from North Dakota.

HARLOW INSTALS FIRST PASTOR

Harlow Lutheran Church, a fortnight
after it was accepted at the 1961 Synod
as the seventh ELCE member congrega-
tion, installed the Rev. V. H. Hennig
as its first pastor. Members brought extra
chairs from their homes to accommodate
the congregation that crowded the tem-
porary timber church for the installation
which took place in the regular evening
worship on Sunday, 14 May.

The Rite of Installation was conducted
by Dr. E. Geo. Pearce, ELCE Chairman,
who also preached the installation ser-
mon.

Pastor Hennig, a 1955 graduate of
Concordia Theological Seminary, St.
Louis, came to England in May, 1959,
after serving Redeemer Lutheran Congre-
gation in Calgary, Alberta. From the
beginning of the Harlow work in Nov-

ember 1959, he served the field as ELCE missionary, from now on as the called pastor of the new congregation.

On the following Sunday, 21 May, a

LUTHERAN WOMEN ADOPT CAMBRIDGE AND BLECKMAR PROJECTS

Lutheran women, gathered at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Tottenham, on Sunday, 30th April, for the second annual convention of the *Lutheran Women's League of Great Britain*, voted to donate their 1961 offerings to mission projects in Cambridge and in southern Africa. For their home mission project, they chose to purchase a cooker for Westfield House, Cambridge, centre of the ELCE pastoral training programme. The overseas project selected was the Bleckmar Mission, the Zulu-Bantu field in southern Africa which has also been designated as the ELCE Foreign Mission for 1961.

Eighty-two women answered the roll call. The LWLGB consists at present of five member societies at Kentish Town, Tottenham, Ruislip, Petts Wood and

special "installation" service was conducted by the Sunday School superintendent and the Church Council for children of the two Sunday Schools.

Sunderland, Co. Durham, and attached groups at Boreham Wood, low, Grindon and Cardiff. Mrs. F. Mayer brought greetings from Lutheran Women's Missionary League America.

Mrs. F. Hilldenbrand was elected a new member to the Executive Committee. Re-elected were Mrs. C. Law, Vice-Chairman, Mrs. E. F. R. S., Secretary, and Mrs. J. Sims and Mr. Welch, committee members.

The Rev. R. Blank of Cambridge gave a talk, illustrated with colour slides, on Lutheran missions in Venezuela, South American field where he vicared prior to his final year of study at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.



The Concordia A Capella Choir of Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebraska, U.S.A., one of the teacher-training schools of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The choir will give thirty-four sacred concerts this summer in the U.S. and England. In England, they will sing in ELCE churches as follows:

ST. ANDREWS, RUISLIP — Friday, 9 June, 7.30 p.m.

ST. PAULS, BOREHAM WOOD — Sunday, 11 June, 10 a.m.

HOLY TRINITY, TOTTENHAM — Sunday, 11 June, 11 a.m.

LUTHER-TYNDALE, KENTISH TOWN — Sunday, 11 June, 6.30 p.m.